

Amendments to the Drawings:

In the Drawing Sheet containing Figures 3-5, Figure 5 has been amended to add element 500, an example entry for a database of the present invention.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Amendments were made to the specification to correct errors and to clarify the specification. No new matter has been added by any of the amendments to the specification.

Claims 1-22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-22 were amended. Support for the amended claims may be found in the claims themselves and in the Specification on page 11, line 9, to page 12, line 2; page 12 lines 14-30; and page 14, line 28, to page 15, line 16.

Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants do not concede that the subject matter encompassed by the earlier presented claims is not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner. Applicants amended the claims in this response solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. Applicants traverse all rejections and respectfully reserve the right to pursue the earlier-presented claims, and additional claims, in one or more continuing applications.

I. Objection to Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the reference sign, "Display 500," which appears in the specification on page 17, line 2. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are included in this response. Therefore, the objection to the drawings has been overcome.

II. Objection to Specification

The Examiner objected to the use of trademarks noted in the specification. Applicants have amended the written description to appropriately acknowledge the mentioned trademarks. Therefore, the objection to the specification has been overcome.

III. Objection to Claims: Claim 1

The Examiner has stated that claim 1 was objected to for an informality between 'an' and 'a'. In response, the claim has been amended to overcome this objection.

IV. 35 U.S.C. § 102, Anticipation: Claim 22

The Examiner has rejected claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Bingham et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0069094 A1 (hereinafter "*Bingham*"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states:

Regarding to claim 22, Bingham et al. discloses a data processing system (see fig. 2a, paragraph [0021], lines 1-6) comprising: a bus system (see fig. 2b, paragraph [0022], lines 3-10); a memory connected to the bus system (see fig. 2b, paragraph [0022], lines 3-17), wherein the memory includes a set of instructions (paragraph [0022], lines 10-14); and a processing unit (i.e. processor) connected to the bus system (see fig. 2b, paragraph [0022], lines 3-10), wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions (paragraph [0022], lines 10-14) to provide a database of meeting room resources (i.e. meeting package) (paragraph [0018], lines 3-9), wherein the database includes attributes describing physical characteristics (i.e. meeting site requirements/criteria) of each meeting room in the meeting room resources (paragraph [0004], lines 11-15, paragraph [0020], lines 7-9); receive a request for a meeting room, wherein the request includes at set of attributes (paragraph [0029], lines 10-12); determine (i.e. define) whether the meeting room meeting the set of attributes is available (paragraph [0029], lines 12- 15 and 18-20); allocate the meeting room to a user in response to a determination that the meeting room is available (paragraph [0029], lines 28-31); and present a set of reserved meeting room resources in response to a determination that the meeting room meeting the set of attributes is unavailable (paragraph [0033], lines 18-25).

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, pages 3-4.

Independent claim 22, as amended herein, is as follows:

22. A data processing system comprising:
- a bus system;
 - a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and
 - a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to:
 - provide a database of meeting room resources, wherein the meeting room resources in the database include assigned attributes;
 - receive a first request from a user, wherein the first request includes a first criteria of desired attributes;
 - determine whether a meeting room resource matching the first criteria of desired attributes is available;
 - present to the user a first set of reserved meeting room resources that match the first criteria of desired attributes in response to a

determination that the meeting room resource matching the first criteria of desired attributes is unavailable;

identify a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource;

send a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource;

track notifications that have been received; and

reallocate the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released.

A prior art reference anticipates the claimed invention under 35 U.S.C. § 102 only if every element of a claimed invention is identically shown in that single reference, arranged as they are in the claims. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 832, 15 U.S.P.Q.2d 1566, 1567 (Fed. Cir. 1990). All limitations of the claimed invention must be considered when determining patentability. *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 1582, 32 U.S.P.Q.2d 1031, 1034 (Fed. Cir. 1994). Anticipation focuses on whether a claim reads on the product or process a prior art reference discloses, not on what the reference broadly teaches. *Kalman v. Kimberly-Clark Corp.*, 713 F.2d 760, 218 U.S.P.Q. 781 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

In this case each and every feature of the presently claimed invention is not identically shown in *Bingham*, arranged as they are in amended claim 22, and, accordingly, *Bingham* does not anticipate the claims. Namely, *Bingham* does not teach or suggest the features of 1) identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, 2) sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource, and 3) reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released.

IV.A. *Bingham* does not teach the feature of identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource

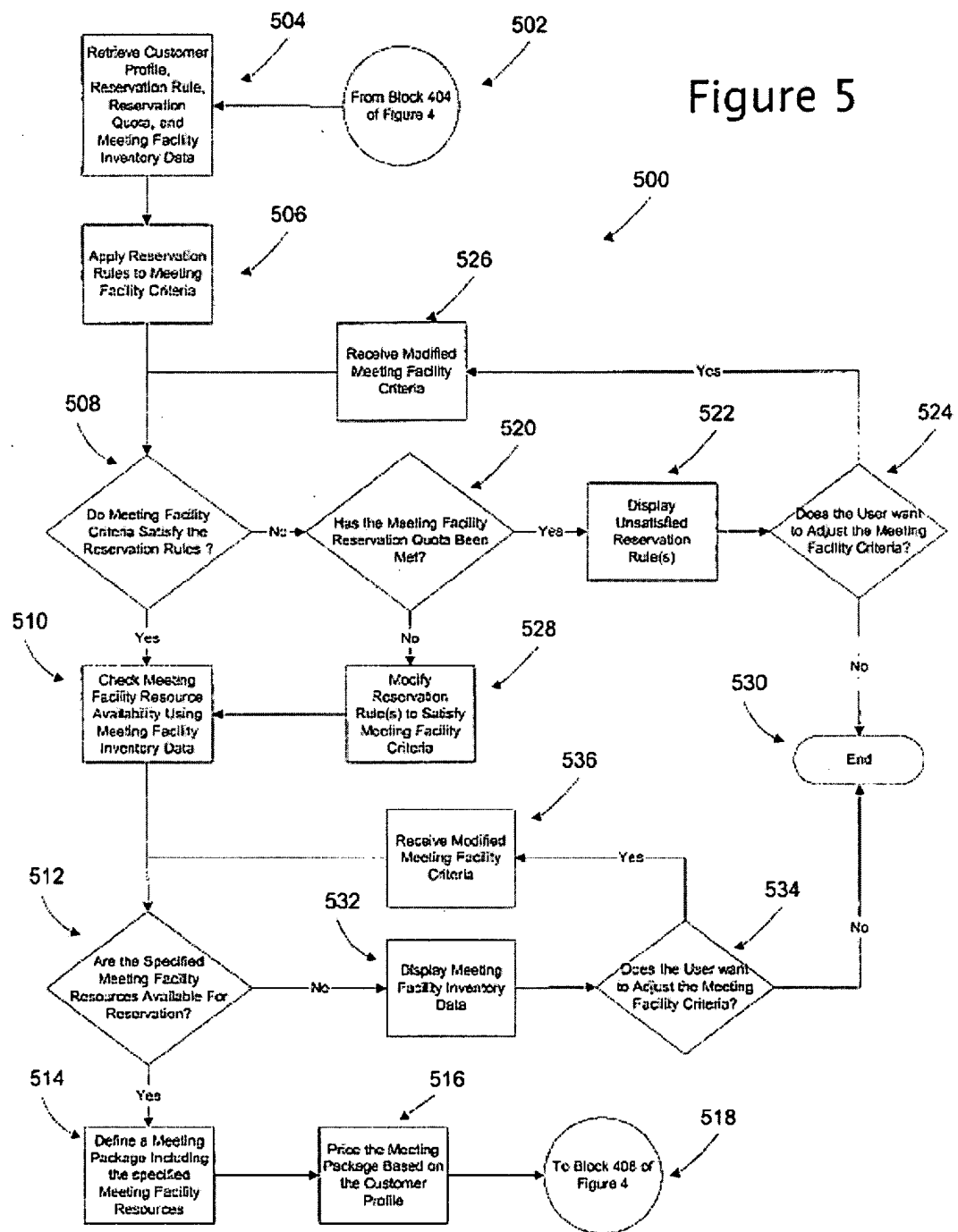
Bingham does not teach the feature of identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, as recited in amended claim 22. *Bingham*, which is

directed to the problem associated with pricing a meeting package consisting of a combination of amenities and services in addition to guestrooms at a facility such as a hotel, states:

[0008] The present invention is a system and method for reserving resources for a meeting. A meeting package having multiple meeting facility resources such as hotel guest rooms, meeting rooms, or food or beverage service is defined for a meeting facility. A reservation request is then received from a user selecting the meeting package. After the meeting package has been requested, each resource of the meeting package is reserved for the user. A customer profile associated with the user may be used to determine the price of the meeting package or its component resources. The meeting package may be defined or reserved based on various meeting facility criteria input by the user, real-time facility inventory data, or facility reservation rules.

Bingham, paragraph [0008].

As can be seen in the cited paragraph, *Bingham* is primarily focused on pricing multiple resources of a meeting facility in a single meeting package based on criteria defined by a user. The actual method taught by *Bingham* is represented by Figure 5, which is as follows:



Bingham, Figure 5.

As can be seen in the above-cited flow chart, *Bingham* element 512 represents the scenario in which the determination is made as to whether the meeting facility resources

matching the user-defined criteria are available for reservation. When a meeting facility is determined to meet the criteria but lacks availability, *Bingham* goes on to state:

If however, the specified meeting facility resources are not available for reservation as determined from the meeting facility inventory data (block 512), the meeting facility's inventory data is displayed to the user (block 532) in order to allow the user an opportunity to effectively modify their preferred meeting dates, the quantity of a particular desired facility resource or other meeting facility criteria to utilize available resources (block 534). The user is then given the option to either terminate the process (block 530) or provide modified meeting facility criteria (block 536) and continue the process at its previous state illustrated by the status immediately following block 510 of FIG. 5.

Bingham, paragraph [0033], lines 18-29.

As can be seen in the above-cited portions of *Bingham*, the only options provided to the user upon a determination that a particular set of resources is unavailable for booking at a meeting facility is to display the meeting facility's entire inventory data to the user to give an opportunity to modify the requested criteria or terminate the booking process altogether. In other words, the user is only shown a list of meeting room facilities that match the user's own criteria. *Bingham* does not teach displaying to the user another set of substitute resources that match a second criteria entered by a different user who reserved the now-unavailable meeting facility resource. In contrast, claim 22 includes the feature of identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource. This distinction exists because *Bingham* teaches a system and method of reserving meeting facility resources where each user seeking to book a meeting facility and the actual meeting facility may all belong to separate entities.

Therefore, *Bingham* does not disclose the feature of providing to the user a set of alternatives that match the criteria requested by another party. Hence, *Bingham* does not teach identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, as recited in amended claim 22. Thus, claim 22, as amended is not anticipated because *Bingham* does not teach each and every feature of claim 22.

IV.B. *Bingham* does not teach the feature of sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource

Bingham does not teach the feature of sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. *Bingham* is directed to a streamlined process of pricing a meeting package that meets a criteria defined by a requesting user or party. Nowhere in *Bingham* is there any mention of rescheduling a meeting facility resource that has already been reserved. As shown earlier, *Bingham* only provides the user an opportunity to modify the requested criteria or terminate the reservation request for a meeting package altogether.

As such, *Bingham* does not anticipate amended claim 22 because *Bingham* does not teach each and every feature of claim 22 – namely, the feature of sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource.

IV.C. *Bingham* does not teach the feature of reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released

As shown earlier, *Bingham* does not mention rescheduling a meeting facility resource. In other words, *Bingham* does not teach reallocating a reserved meeting facility resource from one party to another upon the reserved meeting facility resource being released. Therefore, *Bingham* does not anticipate amended claim 22 because *Bingham* does not teach reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released.

For at least all the above reasons, *Bingham* does not anticipate claim 22, and claim 22 patentably distinguishes over the cited art in its present form. Therefore, the rejection of claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 has been overcome.

V. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 18

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Bingham*. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states:

Regarding to claims 1, 8 and 15, *Bingham et al.* discloses the invention substantially as claimed. *Bingham et al.* discloses a method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable

medium (i.e. disk) for allocating meeting room resources (paragraph [0008], lines 1-2, paragraph [0017], lines 1-2, paragraph [0021], lines 10-13, paragraph [0025], lines 1-6), the method, data processing system and computer program product in a computer readable medium comprising: providing means for providing a database of meeting room resources (paragraph [0017], lines 1-2, paragraph [0018], lines 3-9), wherein the database includes attributes describing physical characteristics of each meeting room (i.e. meeting facility criteria) in the meeting room resources (paragraph [0020], lines 7-9); receiving means for receiving a request for a meeting room, wherein the request includes a set of attributes (i.e. meeting facility criteria)(paragraph [0029], lines 10-12); determining means for determining (i.e. defining) whether the meeting room meeting the set of attributes is available (paragraph [0029], lines 12-15 and 18-20); allocating means, responsive to a determination that the meeting room is available, for allocating the meeting room to a user (paragraph [0029], lines 28-31); presenting means, responsive to a determination that the meeting room meeting the set of attributes is unavailable, for presenting a set of reserved meeting room resources (paragraph [0033], lines 18-25). However, Bingham et al. does not explicitly disclose first, second, third, fourth and fifth instructions (as per claim 15). It is common knowledge in the prior art to have a set of instructions in a computer program product. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the computer program product in a computer readable medium taught by Bingham et al. with the feature of having first, second, third, fourth and fifth instructions (as per claim 15). The motivation for doing so would have been to execute instructions in the computer program product in sequential order.

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, pages 5-6.

The Examiner bears the burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness based on prior art when rejecting claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103. *In re Fritch*, 972 F.2d 1260, 23 U.S.P.Q.2d 1780 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). In determining obviousness, the scope and content of the prior art are... determined; differences between the prior art and the claims at issue are... ascertained; and the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art resolved. Against this background the obviousness or non-obviousness of the subject matter is determined. *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 148 USPQ 459, 383 U.S. 1 (1966). "Often, it will be necessary for a court to look to interrelated teachings of multiple patents; the effects of demands known to the design community or present in the marketplace; and the background knowledge possessed by a person having ordinary skill in the

art, all in order to determine whether there was an apparent reason to combine the known elements in the fashion claimed by the patent at issue.” *KSR Int’l. Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 127 S. Ct. 1727, 1782 U.S.P.Q.2d 1385, 1396 (2007). “Rejections on obviousness grounds cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness.” *Id.* (citing *In re Kahn*, 441 F.3d 977, 988 (CA Fed. 2006)).

Amended independent claim 1, which is representative of amended independent claims 8 and 15, is as follows:

1. A method in a data processing system for reallocating meeting room resources, the method comprising:
 - providing a database of meeting room resources, wherein the meeting room resources in the database include assigned attributes;
 - receiving a first request from a user, wherein the first request includes a first criteria of desired attributes;
 - determining whether a meeting room resource matching the first criteria of desired attributes is available;
 - responsive to a determination that the meeting room resource matching the first criteria of desired attributes is unavailable, presenting to the user a first set of reserved meeting room resources that match the first criteria of desired attributes;
 - identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource;
 - sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource;
 - tracking notifications that have been received; and
 - responsive to the reserved meeting room resource being released, reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user.

The prior art reference cited by the Examiner must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The Examiner failed to state a *prima facie* obviousness rejection against claim 1 because *Bingham* does not teach or suggest 1) identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, 2) sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource, and 3) reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released.

Applicants note that amended independent claim 1 comprises features that are also included in amended claim 22. Therefore, the same arguments advanced with respect to claim 22 also apply to claim 1 in showing that *Bingham* does not teach each and every feature of claim 1, as amended.

Furthermore, *Bingham* does not suggest the above-mentioned features of claim 1. As established earlier, *Bingham* is directed to a streamlined process of pricing a meeting package for a facility such as a hotel, including guestrooms, amenities, and services. To that end, *Bingham* teaches applying reservation rules to determine whether the requested reservation criteria match the available meeting packages in addition to determining whether the desired meeting facility resources are open for booking. Moreover, users (i.e. customers) of *Bingham* and the meeting facility resources do not necessarily belong to the same organization. This is reflected by *Bingham*'s lack of teaching or suggesting the rescheduling of resources that have already been reserved in favor of having the user modify the requested criteria or terminate the reservation request. Therefore, *Bingham* does not suggest 1) identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, 2) sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource, or 3) reallocating the reserved meeting room resource to the user in response to the reserved meeting room resource being released.

Therefore, the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness in rejecting claim 1, and claim 1 patentably distinguishes over *Bingham* in its present form. Amended independent claim 1 is representative of amended independent claims 8 and 15; therefore, the same arguments advanced with regard to claim 1 also apply to claims 8 and 15. As dependent claims 2 and 4, 9 and 11, and 16 and 18 depend from amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively, the same arguments advanced with respect to independent claim 1 also apply to these dependent claims. Thus, the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

VI. **35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claims 3, 10 and 17**

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 10 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Bingham* in view of Ralston et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0005055 A1 (hereinafter "*Ralston*"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states:

Regarding to claims 3, 10 and 17 Bingham et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Bingham et al. does not explicitly disclose wherein the attributes include a white board, a conference phone, wired network connections, wireless network connections, an overhead projector, and a podium. Ralston et al. teaches attributes (i.e. services) to include room requirements, facility capability stipulations and equipments (paragraph [0028], lines 1-5, paragraph [0031], lines 18-20, paragraph [0037], lines 20-25). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium of Bingham et al. wherein the attributes a white board, a conference phone, wired network connections, wireless network connections, an overhead projector, and a podium as taught by Ralston et al. as both Bingham et al. and Ralston et al. are directed to the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium for allocating meeting room resources. The motivation for doing so would have been to meet desired attributes to those reserving the meeting room.

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, pages 7-8.

The Examiner failed to state a *prima facie* obviousness rejection against dependent claims 3, 10, and 17 because *Bingham* and *Ralston*, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the features of these dependent claims. For example, the cited references fail to teach or suggest 1) identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, and 2) sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. Dependent claims 3, 10, and 17 depend from amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively. As such, the arguments made with respect to claim 1 regarding these features also apply to claims 3, 10, and 17, at least by virtue of their dependency, in demonstrating that *Bingham* does not teach or suggest each and every feature of these claims.

The other cited reference, *Ralston*, fails to make up for *Bingham*'s deficiencies. Similar to *Bingham*, *Ralston* is also directed to booking reservations in facilities, a difference being that *Ralston* further discloses making a single reservation for resources at multiple facilities. *Ralston* states:

[0013] Generally described, the present invention provides a computer implemented method of scheduling a reservation at a plurality of facilities providing a plurality of services, comprising receiving a packet of client information from a client, the client information including personal data, service data, client reservation preference data, and payment data; comparing the service data to a set of service constraints in order to determine any limitations on the scheduling of the reservation; inputting the client information into a scheduling server; verifying the client information; generating a predetermined number of reservation candidates based upon an analysis of the client information and the reservation scheduling limitations; communicating the reservation candidates to the client; generating a reservation based upon the client's selection of one of the reservation candidates; generating reservation information related to the reservation, the reservation information including the client information, the service constraints, a reservation date, a reservation time, the identity of the available facility, and the resources to be utilized; reporting at least a portion of the reservation information to the client and all of the client information to the available facility; and confirming the reservation in the scheduling server.

Ralston, paragraph [0013].

The method taught by *Ralston* is described in the following illustration:

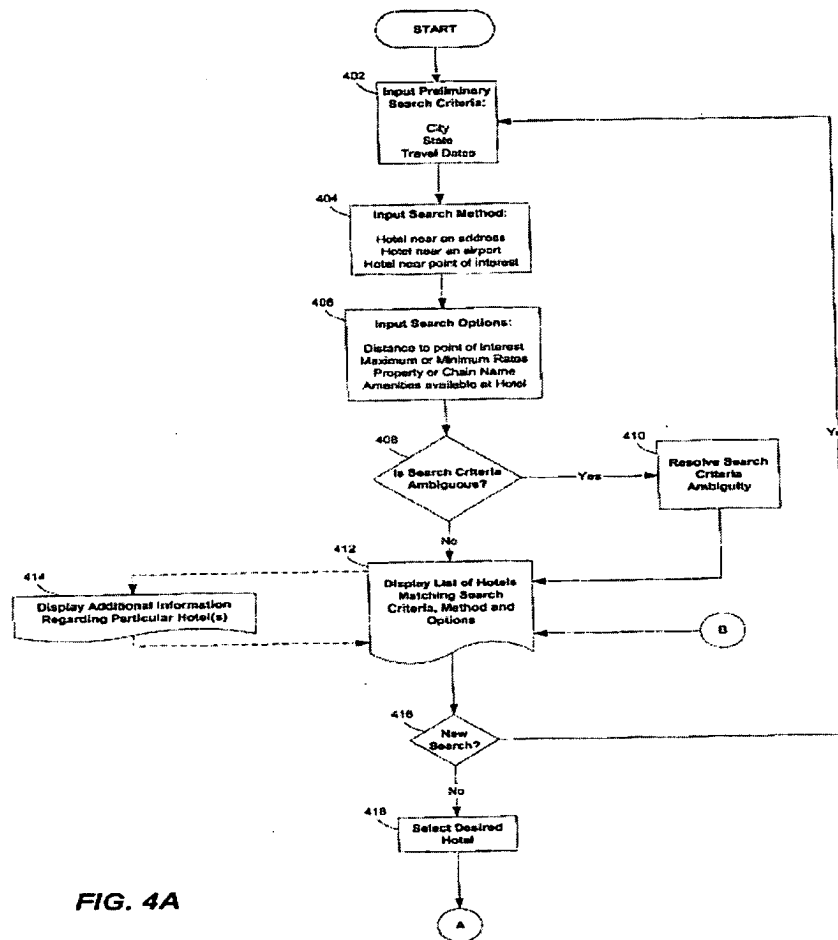


FIG. 4A

Ralston, Figure 4A.

As can be seen, *Ralston* shares many features with *Bingham*. Regarding the situation in which resources at a particular facility matching the user's criteria are unavailable, *Ralston* states the following:

If the choices displayed to the user are unacceptable, or if no choices are shown because there are no hotels matching the search criteria, the user may elect to run a new search (416). Alternatively, the user may select one of the hotels in the displayed list (418).

Ralston, paragraph [0045], lines 5-9.

Because *Ralston* is directed to scheduling a reservation at multiple facilities, *Ralston* focuses on providing numerous facility candidates and the option to run a new search. Running a new search defined by the same user is not the same as "identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a

reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource,” a feature of claims 3, 10, and 17. Therefore, *Ralston* does not teach or suggest “identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource.” Consequently, *Bingham* and *Ralston*, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the features of claims 3, 10, and 17, and thus, do not render these claims obvious.

Furthermore, *Ralston* also does not teach or suggest sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. Similar to *Bingham*, *Ralston* is not concerned with rescheduling rooms that are currently booked to another user (i.e. another customer), unless the other customer requests a rescheduling or cancelation or fails to appear on the date of reservation. Regarding rescheduling and cancelations, *Ralston* states:

[0038] The scheduling system 10 of the present invention also includes the capability of handling the rescheduling or canceling of previously-scheduled reservations. A client 20 may connect to the scheduling server 80 via the method discussed above and, once connected, may notify the scheduling server 80 of his reservation number, at which time the scheduling server 80 will locate the reservation information generated when the reservation was scheduled. Once the reservation information is retrieved, the scheduling server 80 will provide the client 20 with options regarding the reservation, including without limitation confirmation, cancellation, and modification. If the client 20 wishes to cancel the reservation, the scheduling server 80 will notify the facility 35, 45, 55 at which the reservation is scheduled to occur, in order that the facility 35, 45, 55 can remove whatever restrictions were placed upon it, in terms of resources, by the scheduling of the reservation, thus freeing up those resources for a different client's use. Should the client 20 wish to reschedule the reservation, the scheduling server 80 will obtain from the client 20 a new set of client reservation preference data and will, in the same manner described above, generate a new set of reservation candidates from which the client 20 may select in order to reschedule his reservation.

Ralston, paragraph [0038].

With regard to the other scenario in which a reservation is canceled because the customer fails to appear on for the reservation, *Ralston* discloses:

[0039] As illustrated in FIG. 2, the scheduling system 10 of the present invention is also capable of allocating facilities and resources to clients who seek and/or receive services without a reservation, i.e., walk-in clients

23, and of reallocating facilities and resources in situations where clients with scheduled reservations to not appear for their reservations without canceling their reservations. When such situations occur, personnel at the facility 35, 45, 55 affected by the walk-in or no-show enter into the facility's remote schedule server 38, 48, 58 appropriate information pertaining to the resources encumbered (in the case of a walk-in) or available (in the case of a no-show), and this information is in turn transmitted via the electronics communications network 70 to the central scheduling server 80.

Ralston, paragraph [0039].

Nowhere in *Ralston* is there mention of a notification being sent out by a facility or the reservation system to a party who currently has a reservation that another party is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. This is because *Ralston* teaches a system, similar to *Bingham*, in which one user's reservation criteria is not reconciled with another reservation criteria that is defined by another user who has already booked a reservation. Therefore, *Ralston* does not teach or suggest "sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource," a feature of dependent claims 3, 10, and 17.

Thus, *Bingham* and *Ralston*, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all the features of claims 3, 10, and 17. Consequently, the rejection of claims 3, 10 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

VII. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claims 5, 12 and 19

The Examiner has rejected claims 5, 12 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Bingham* in view of Vossler, U.S. Patent No. 6,614,450 B1 (hereinafter "*Vossler*"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states:

Regarding to claims 5, 12 and 19, Bingham et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Bingham et al. does not disclose wherein the presenting means is a first presenting means (as per claim 12) and sub-instructions (as per claim 19) further comprising: second presenting means (as per claim 12) and sub-instructions (as per claim 19) responsive to a selection of a reserved meeting room from the set of reserved meeting room resources, presenting contact information for a reserving party of the reserved meeting room (as per claims 5, 12 and 19). Vossler teaches displaying information regarding room usage (column 5, lines 24-30, lines 47-50, column 6, lines 15-19). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to combine the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium of Bingham et al. wherein the presenting means is a first presenting means and sub-instructions further comprising: second presenting means and sub-instructions responsive to a selection of a reserved meeting room from the set of reserved meeting room resources, presenting contact information for a reserving party of the reserved meeting room as taught by Vossler, as both Bingham et al. and Vossler are directed to the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium for allocating meeting room resources. The motivation for doing so would have been to be able to contact the person or group reserving the room if needed.

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, pages 8-9.

The Examiner failed to state a *prima facie* obviousness rejection against dependent claims 5, 12, and 19 because *Bingham* and *Vossler*, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the features of these dependent claims. For example, the cited references fail to teach or suggest 1) identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a reserved meeting room resource, and 2) sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. Dependent claims 5, 12, and 19 depend from amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively. As such, the arguments made with respect to claim 1 regarding these features also apply to claims 5, 12, and 19, at least by virtue of their dependency, in demonstrating that *Bingham* does not teach or suggest each and every feature of these claims.

The other cited reference, *Vossler*, fails to make up for *Bingham*'s deficiencies. *Vossler*, which is directed to an information display system for displaying and coordinating room resources at a facility, states the following:

An information display system is disclosed. The information display system includes a display connected to a controller and a network interface. The information display system is capable of changing the information processed by the system through a network interface or directly through an input/output device connected to the system. The present invention is directed to an information display system. An information display system for scheduling the utilization of a facility, comprising a controller connected to a display and a network interface.

Vossler, Abstract.

As can be seen from the above-cited passage, *Vossler* primarily focuses on a method of displaying information regarding occupancy or scheduled allocation of a room resource in a facility. *Vossler* further discloses that the display unit is placed at or near the entry to the room resource:

Schedules regarding the use of conference rooms, patient information in doctor's offices, and personal schedules of office occupants may be easily updated. Presenting this information on or near a door to the room would help to avoid the needless interruptions caused by people looking for a particular meeting or to check if that room is actually being used.

Vossler, column 1, lines 34-40.

Although *Vossler* briefly discloses the features of reserving a room resource and checking to see whether a particular room has already been reserved, there is no mention of querying a set of room resources that match a desired criteria. *Vossler* discloses:

For example, an office worker connected to the network could determine if a room is reserved, when it is reserved, and reserve a room if necessary. If an office worker no longer needs a room or needs to change his schedule, the information may be changed easily over the network.

Vossler, column 8, lines 11-15.

Determining whether a room is reserved is not the same as identifying a set of meeting room resources that match a particular criteria of desired attributes specified in a request. As *Vossler* focuses on a convenient electronic display unit for a particular room, *Vossler* does not contemplate a remedy for the situation in which a user tries to reserve a room that has already been allocated to another user. Consequently, *Vossler* does not teach or suggest identifying a second set of substitute meeting room resources that match a second criteria of desired attributes that was requested by a reserving party of a meeting room resource that has already been reserved, a feature of claims 5, 12, and 19.

Vossler also does not teach or suggest sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. The messaging software disclosed by *Vossler* serves two functions that are not related to requesting release of a reserved room: leaving a message for a current occupant of a room and sending reminders to meeting participants. With regard to messaging the occupant, *Vossler* states:

Referring now to **FIG. 6**, the information display system contains a keypad **620** to enter information into the information display system **600**.

In this exemplary embodiment, the information display system utilizing messaging software to process, retain, and display messages on the display 610 ... For example, if the information display system **600** was placed outside an office, visitors may access the message feature **640** through the keypad **620** or cursor control device **630** on the information display system **600** to leave a message for the occupant ... Additionally, an individual may leave a phone message for a conference attendee.

Vossler, column 5, line 58, to column 6, line 10 (emphasis added).

With regard to sending reminders, *Vossler* states:

In this embodiment, the information display system **700** utilizes messaging software to send a reminder message 740 or a series of reminder messages through the network **710** to the computer **720** of the person who reserved the room **750**. For example, this message may ask whether the person will keep the reservation or if the reservation should be deleted. Another type of message may serve as a reminder for a group of people to attend a meeting.

Vossler, column 6, lines 15-23.

The above-cited portions of *Vossler* demonstrate that the messaging software does not send a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource. Rather, the messaging software taught by *Vossler* is used either to leave a message for a current occupant of a room or to remind meeting participants of a scheduled meeting event. Furthermore, a message asking whether a user will keep a reservation is not the same as notifying the reserving party that another user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource.

As shown earlier, *Vossler* is not concerned with providing a means to reallocate a reserved room from one user to another. Rather, *Vossler* is directed at displaying a reservation schedule at a convenient location near a particular room. Therefore, *Vossler* does not teach or suggest sending a notification to the reserving party that the user is requesting release of a reserved meeting room resource.

Consequently, *Bingham* and *Vossler*, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the features of claims 5, 12, and 19. Thus, the rejection of claims 5, 12 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

VIII. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21

The Examiner has rejected claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Bingham* in view of *Okawa*, U.S. Patent No. 5,933,810 (hereinafter "*Okawa*"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to claims 6, 13, and 20, the Examiner states:

Regarding to claims 6, 13 and 20, Bingham et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Bingham et al. does not disclose wherein the determining means is a first determining means and wherein the allocating means is the first allocating means (as per claim 13) further comprising second determining means (as per claim 13) and sixth instructions (as per claim 20) responsive to a selection of a reserved meeting room from the set of reserved meeting room resources by a user, determining whether the user has priority over a reserving party of the reserved meeting room; and second allocating means (as per claims 6 and 13) and seventh instructions (as per claim 20) responsive to the user having priority over the reserving party, allocating the reserved meeting room the user. *Okawa* teaches assigning and determining a priority for users making reservations (column 1, lines 14-18, lines 34-39, lines 47-51, column 2, lines 65-67, column 5, lines 14-17) and replacing the reservation to the user having higher priority (i.e. degree of importance) (column 9, lines 35-43, column 10, lines 17-19). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium of Bingham et al. wherein the determining means is a first determining means and wherein the allocating means is the first allocating means further comprising second determining means and sixth instructions responsive to a selection of a reserved meeting room from the set of reserved meeting room resources by a user, determining whether the user has priority over a reserving party of the reserved meeting room; and second allocating means and seventh instructions responsive to the user having priority over the reserving party, allocating the reserved meeting room the user taught by *Okawa* as both Bingham et al. and *Okawa* are directed to the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium for allocating meeting room resources. The motivation for doing so would have been to allocate a reserved meeting room to a user having higher priority.

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, pages 9-10.

Dependent claims 6, 13, and 20 depend upon amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively. As previously shown, *Bingham* does not teach or suggest all of the features of amended claim 1. *Okawa* also does not teach or suggest all of the features of amended claim 1.

Therefore, the proposed combination, considered as a whole, does not teach or suggest all of the features of dependent claims 6, 13, and 20.

With respect to claims 7, 14, and 21, the Examiner states:

Regarding to claims 7, 14 and 21, Bingham et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Bingham et al. does not disclose eighth instructions (as per claim 21) responsive to an allocation of the reserved meeting room to the user, sending the reserving party a notification of the allocation (as per claims 7, 14 and 21). Okawa teaches sending a notification (i.e. electronic mail) informing the person who made the reservation and others (column 9, lines 56-64). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium of Bingham et al. with the feature of eighth instructions responsive to an allocation of the reserved meeting room to the user, sending the reserving party a notification of the allocation taught by Okawa, as both Bingham et al. and Okawa are directed to the method, data processing system, and computer program product in a computer readable medium for allocating meeting room resources. The motivation for doing so would be to notify the reserving party of the reservation.

Office Action dated November 14, 2007, page 10.

Dependent claims 7, 14, and 21 depend upon amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively. As previously shown, *Bingham* does not teach or suggest all of the features of amended claim 1. *Okawa* also does not teach or suggest all of the features of amended claim 1. Therefore, the proposed combination, considered as a whole, does not teach or suggest all of the features of dependent claims 7, 14, and 21. Therefore, the rejection of claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

IX. Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the cited references and is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: March 12, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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